

Statement on the District Court Decision Striking Down the Line Item Veto

April 11, 1997

I firmly believe that the lower court has ruled incorrectly in striking down this landmark line item veto legislation. I continue to believe that the line item veto—a power exercised by 43 Governors—is an important tool for the President to strike wasteful spending and tax items from legislation. The last Congress took the right step in enacting this important tool, and I was very pleased to sign it into law.

The Solicitor General has reviewed the decision and has authorized an immediate appeal

to the United States Supreme Court. The Solicitor General intends to ask the Supreme Court to expedite the consideration of the appeal and to schedule argument in June so that the case can be decided before the conclusion of the Court's term at the end of June.

This action has my strong support. It is my hope that it will result in an expedited ruling that clears up any confusion.

Memorandum on Expanded Family and Medical Leave Policies

April 11, 1997

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Expanded Family and Medical Leave Policies

I have strongly supported meeting Federal employees' family and medical leave needs through enactment of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and the Federal Employees Family Friendly Leave Act of 1994 (FEFFLA). However, Federal employees often have important family and medical needs that do not qualify for unpaid leave under the FMLA or sick leave under the FEFFLA. I ask you to take immediate action to assist Federal workers further in balancing the demands of work and family.

Last year I proposed to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. My legislation would allow Federal and eligible private sector workers 24 hours of unpaid leave during any 12-month period to fulfill certain family obligations. Under the legislation, employees could use unpaid leave to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of a child, including early childhood education activities; accompany children to routine medical and dental examinations; and tend to the needs of older relatives.

In furtherance of my proposed policy, I ask that you take immediate action within existing statutory authorities to ensure that Federal employees may schedule and be granted up to 24 hours of leave without pay each year for the following activities:

(1) *School and Early Childhood Educational Activities*—to allow employees to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of a child. This would include parent-teacher conferences or meetings with child-care providers, interviewing for a new school or child-care facility, or participating in volunteer activities supporting the child's educational advancement. In this memorandum, "school" refers to an elementary school, secondary school, Head Start program, or a child-care facility.

(2) *Routine Family Medical Purposes*—to allow parents to accompany children to routine medical or dental appointments, such as annual checkups or vaccinations. Although these activities are not currently covered by the FMLA, the FEFFLA does permit employees to use up to 13 days of sick leave each year for such purposes. Agencies should assure that employees are able to use up to 24 hours of leave without pay each year for these purposes in cases